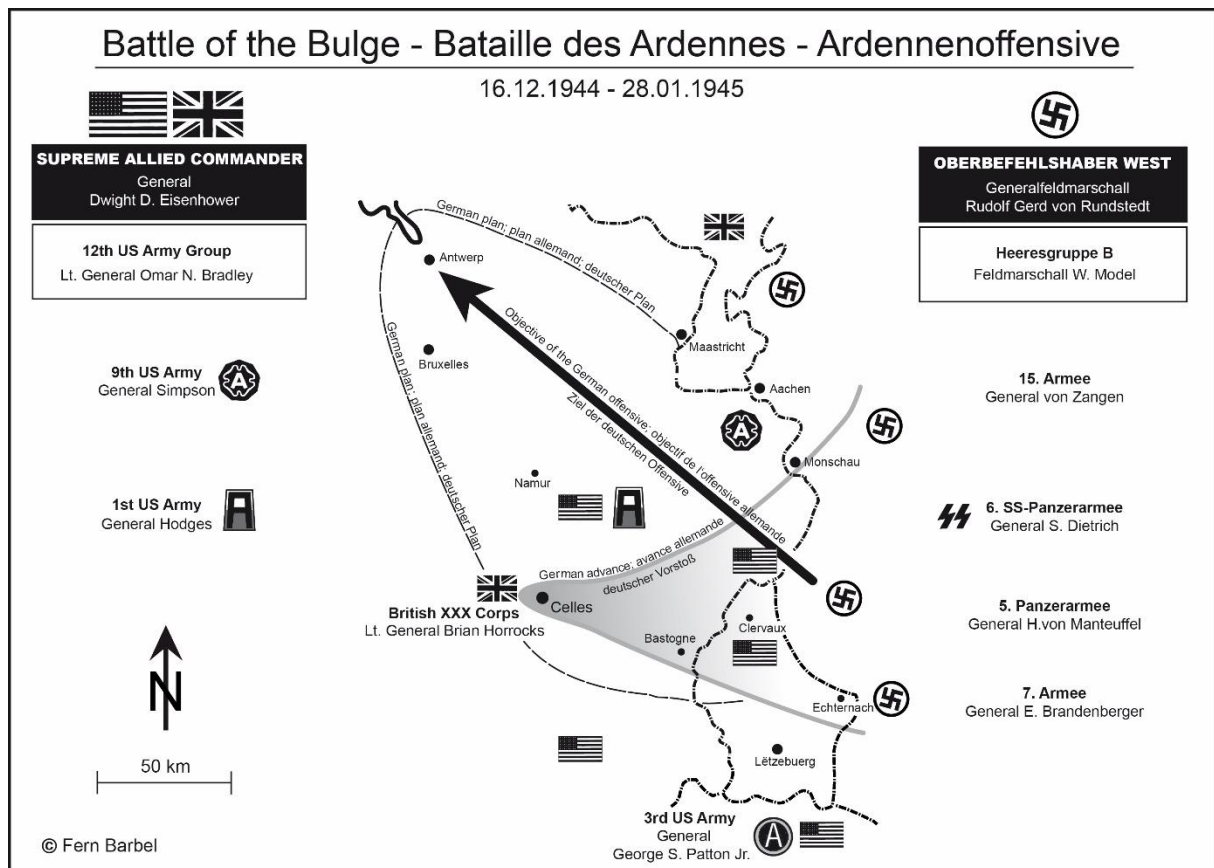
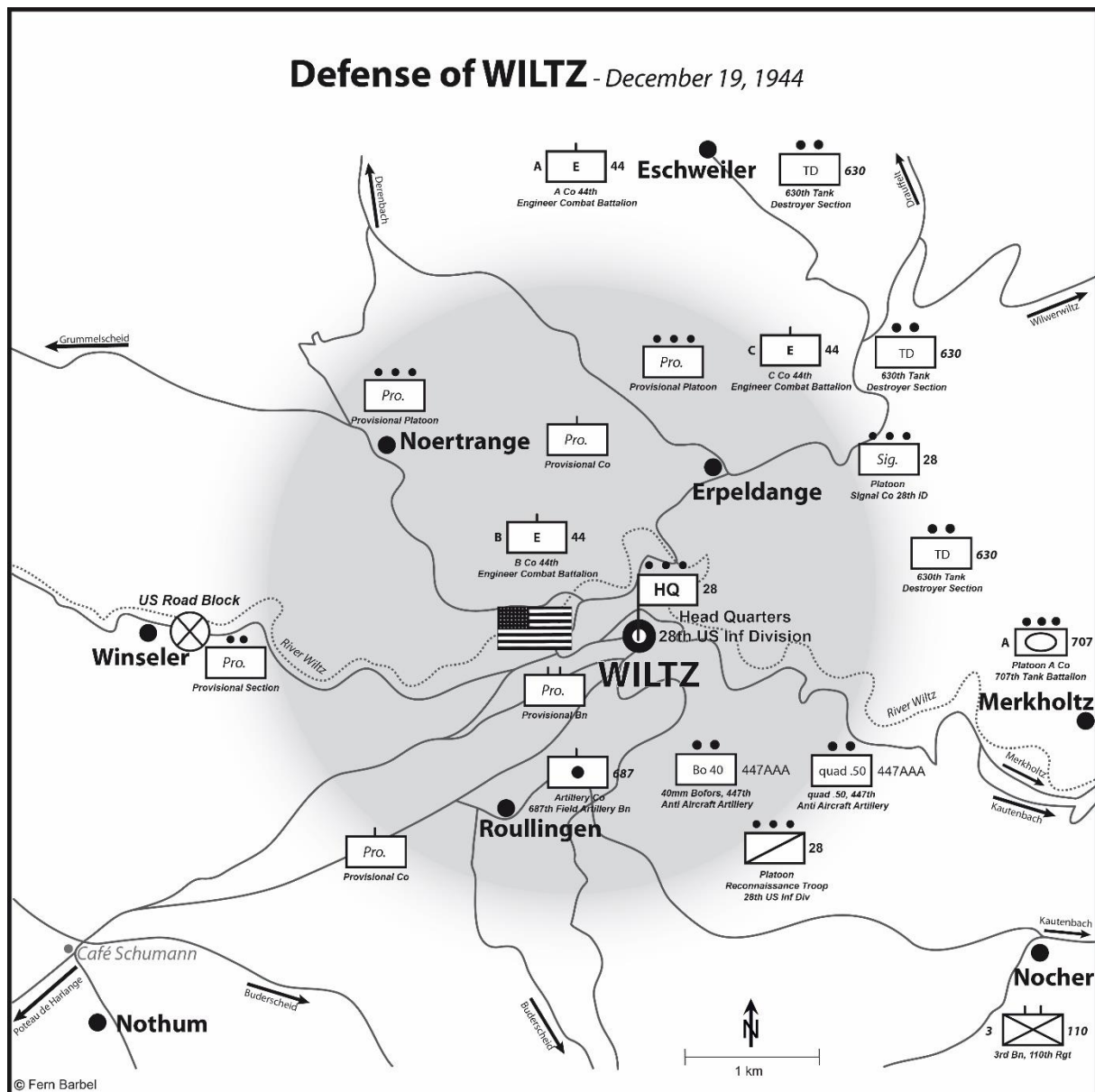




**HELL at  
SCHUMANN'S  
CORNER**

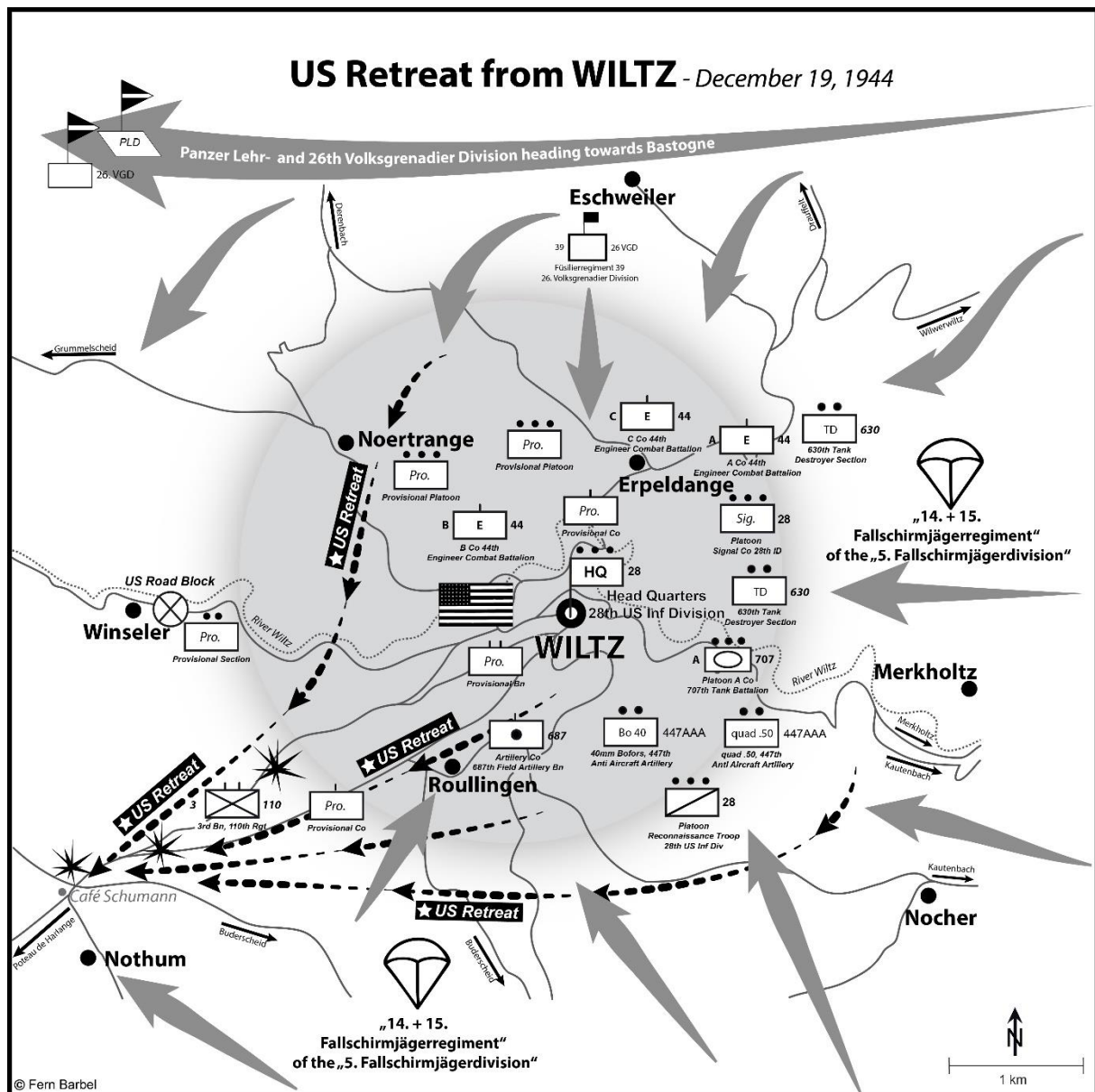
**Wiltz / Luxembourg**





On **December 16, 1944**, Hitler launched a surprise attack against the US troops holding the front from Echternach (L) to Monschau (Germ.). This became known as the Battle of the Bulge. It was intended to reach the port of Antwerp (B) within three days, to split the British and US forces and to urge the Allies to an armistice. The stiff resistance of the US defenders thwarted that plan and allowed General George S. Patton's (Jr.) Third Army to liberate the encircled town of Bastogne (B) on 26<sup>th</sup> of December 1944 and to attack the Germans on the southern flank.



  At Wiltz, on **December 17**, 1944, at about 4:00 p.m., General Norman D. Cota ordered the 28<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division's headquarters to be moved to Sibret (Belgium). The town of Wiltz was defended by a "Provisional Battalion" (including all the personnel such as the bandsmen, the cooks and the military police), the 600 men of the 44<sup>th</sup> Engineer Combat Battalion, the remainders of the 707<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion, the 447<sup>th</sup> Anti Aircraft Battalion and the 687<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion. On Dec 19, Colonel Daniel B. Strickler retreated with the remains of the 3rd Battalion, 110<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 28<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division, totalling 250 men, to Wiltz. He assumed responsibility for the defense of Wiltz.



  On **December 19**, at 2:00 p.m., the Germans attacked Wiltz from three sides and succeeded in penetrating the center of the town. The Americans defended their positions until they ran out of ammunition. In the evening, Col. Strickler gave the order to retreat in small groups and try to reach Sibret and Bastogne, Belgium. As the town of Wiltz had meanwhile been encircled, many American soldiers were killed, hurt or taken prisoners by using the road via Café Schumann and the Poteau of Harlange or via the Poteau of Doncols to reach Belgium.

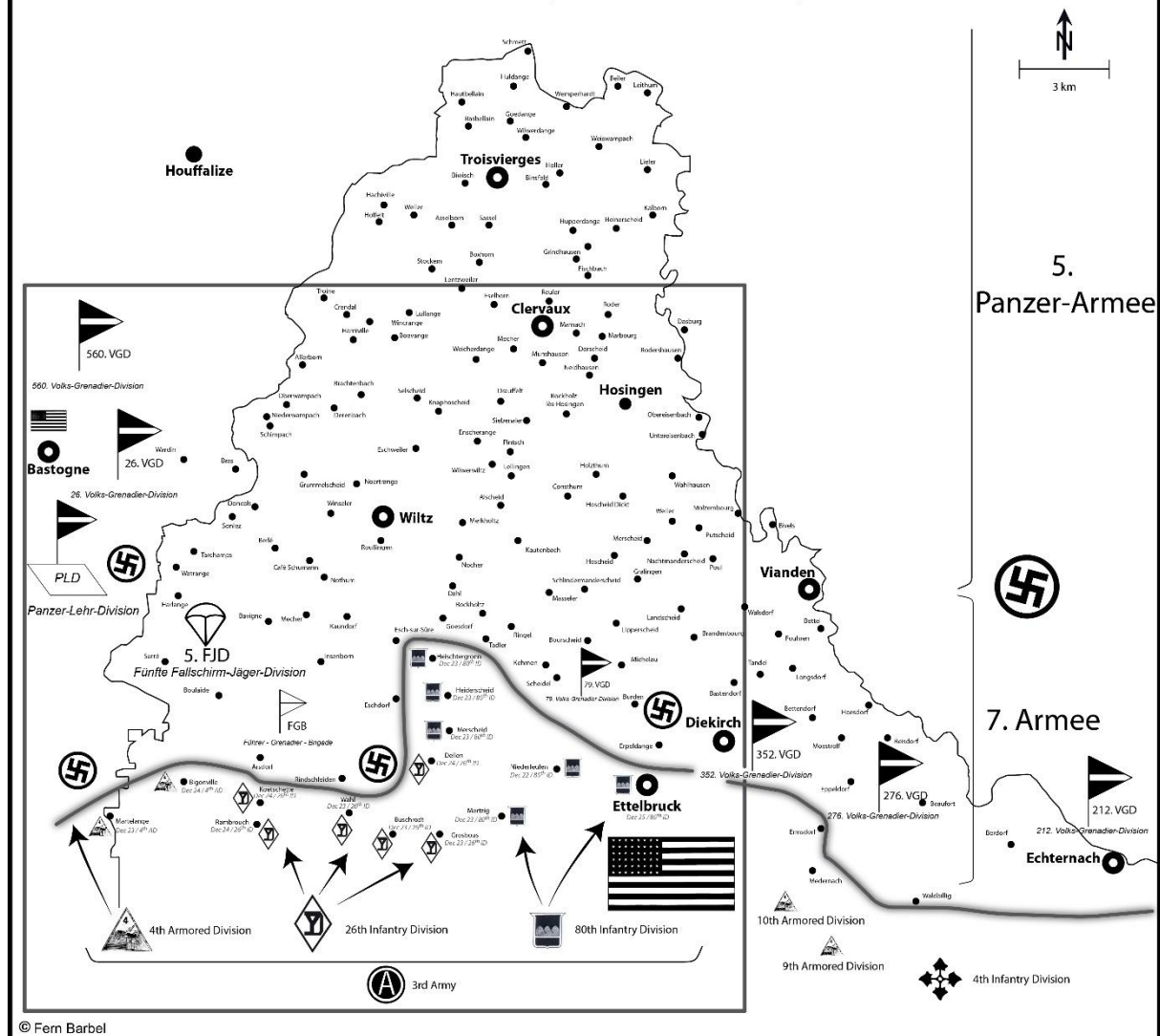
110<sup>th</sup> Regiment:

On December 15, 1944: 150 officers and 2.823 soldiers.

On December 23, 1944: 55 officers and 730 soldiers.

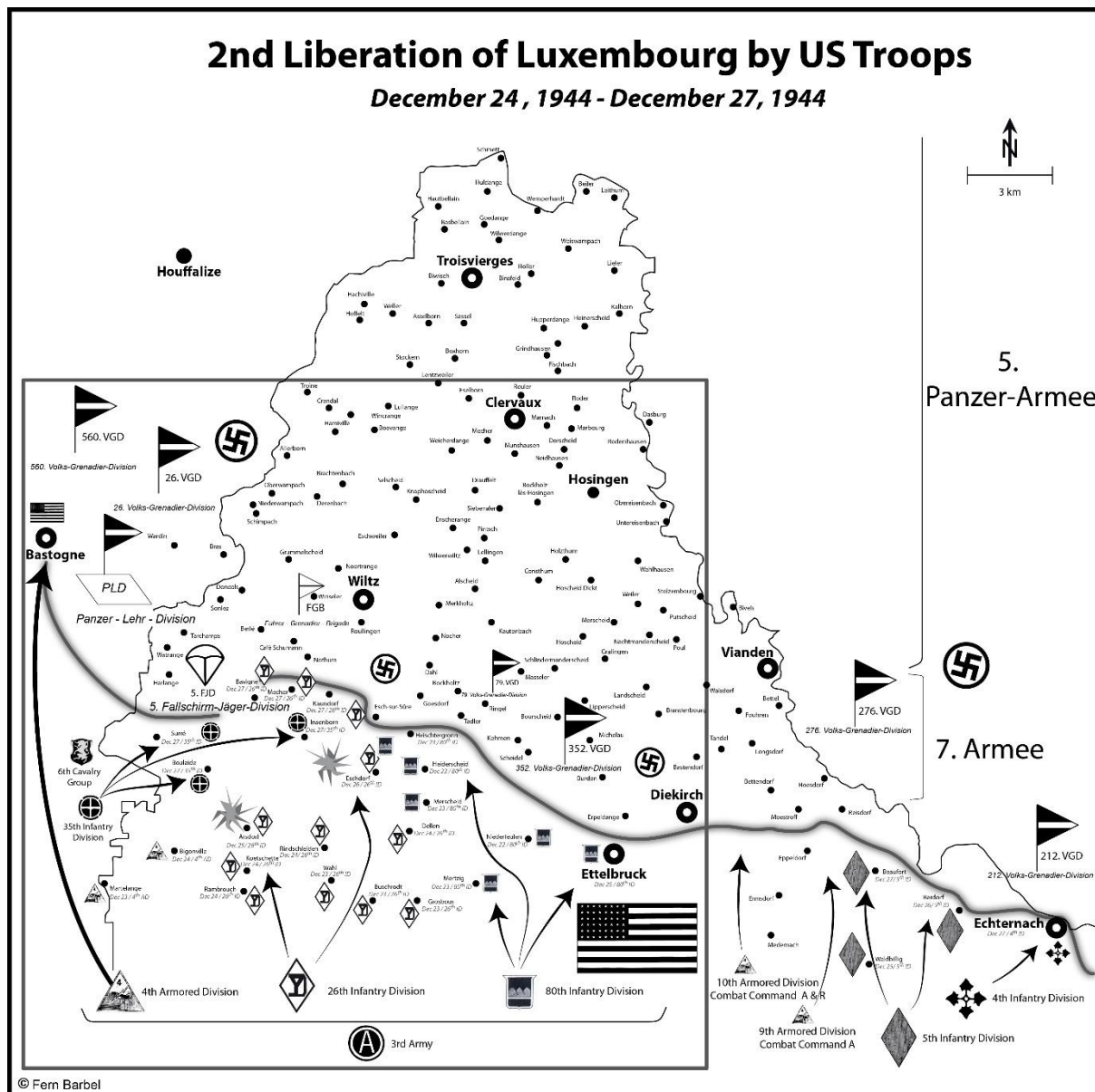
## 2nd Liberation of Luxembourg by US Troops



December 22, 1944 - December 25, 1944

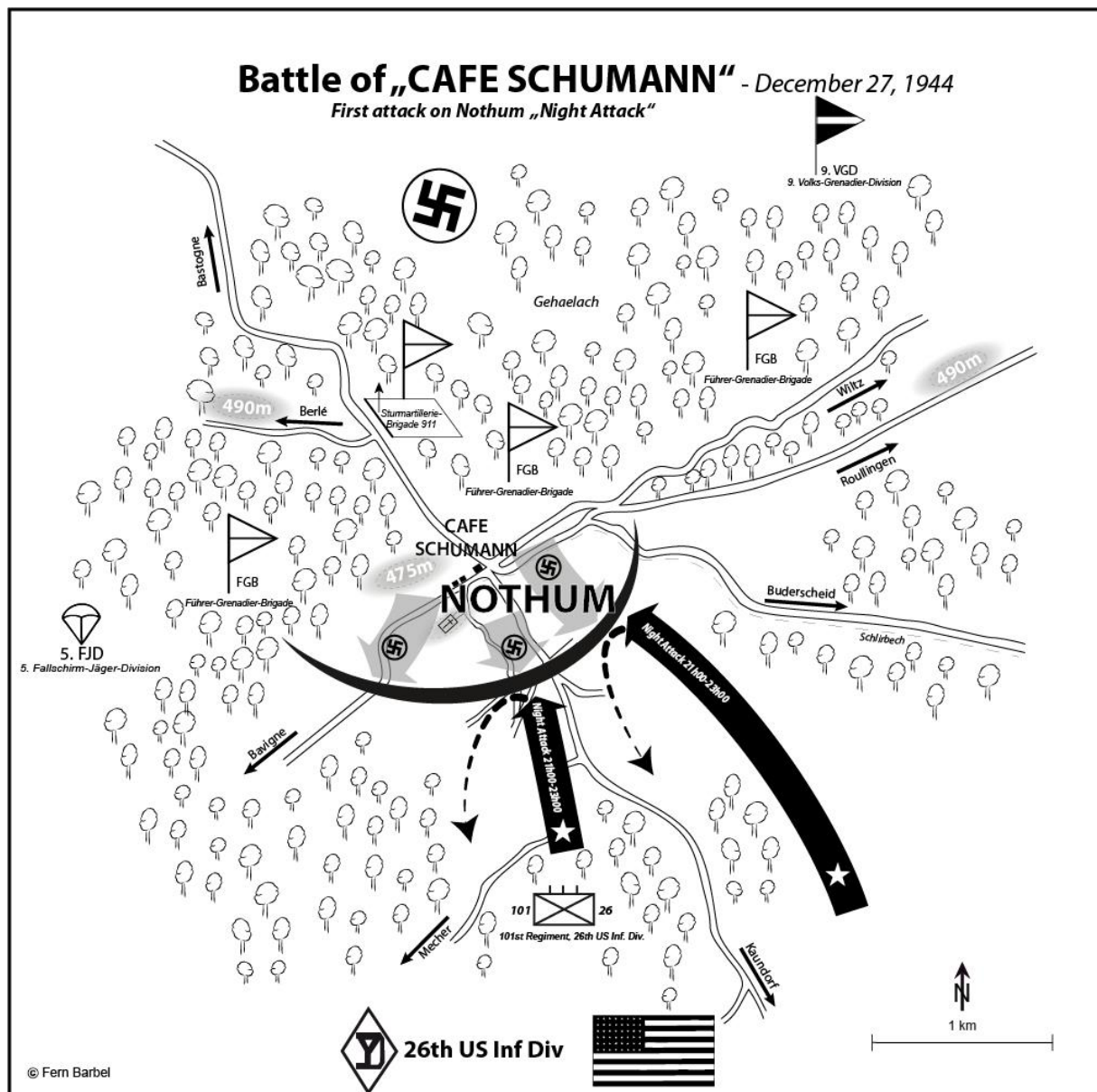




On **December 22, 1944**, at 06:00 a.m., General George S. Patton's (Jr.) 3<sup>rd</sup> Army attacked the German southern flank with three divisions abreast. The 4<sup>th</sup> US Armored Division was to advance up the Arlon – Bastogne highway with the 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division („Yankee Division“) in the center and the 80<sup>th</sup> US Inf Div on the right. The first contacts with the enemy took place at Martelange, Rindschleiden, Rambrouch, Grosbous and Ettelbruck. – On the **following days**, the enemy resisted vigorously. The 4<sup>th</sup> US Armored Division captured Martelange and Bigonville. The 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division pushed the enemy out of Koetschette, Rambrouch, Wahl, Grosbous, Dellen and Buschrodt. The 80<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division succeeded in advancing up to Mertzig, Merscheid, Heiderscheid, Heiderscheidergrund and to liberate Ettelbruck on Dec 25. – In order to have at hand a rapid and powerful armor-infantry team, „Task Force Hamilton“ was organized. It consisted of elements of the 328<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 26<sup>th</sup> Division, Company C of 735<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion, one Platoon of 818<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion, one Section of 390<sup>th</sup> Anti Aircraft Artillery Battalion, one Section of 101<sup>st</sup> Engineer Combat Battalion.

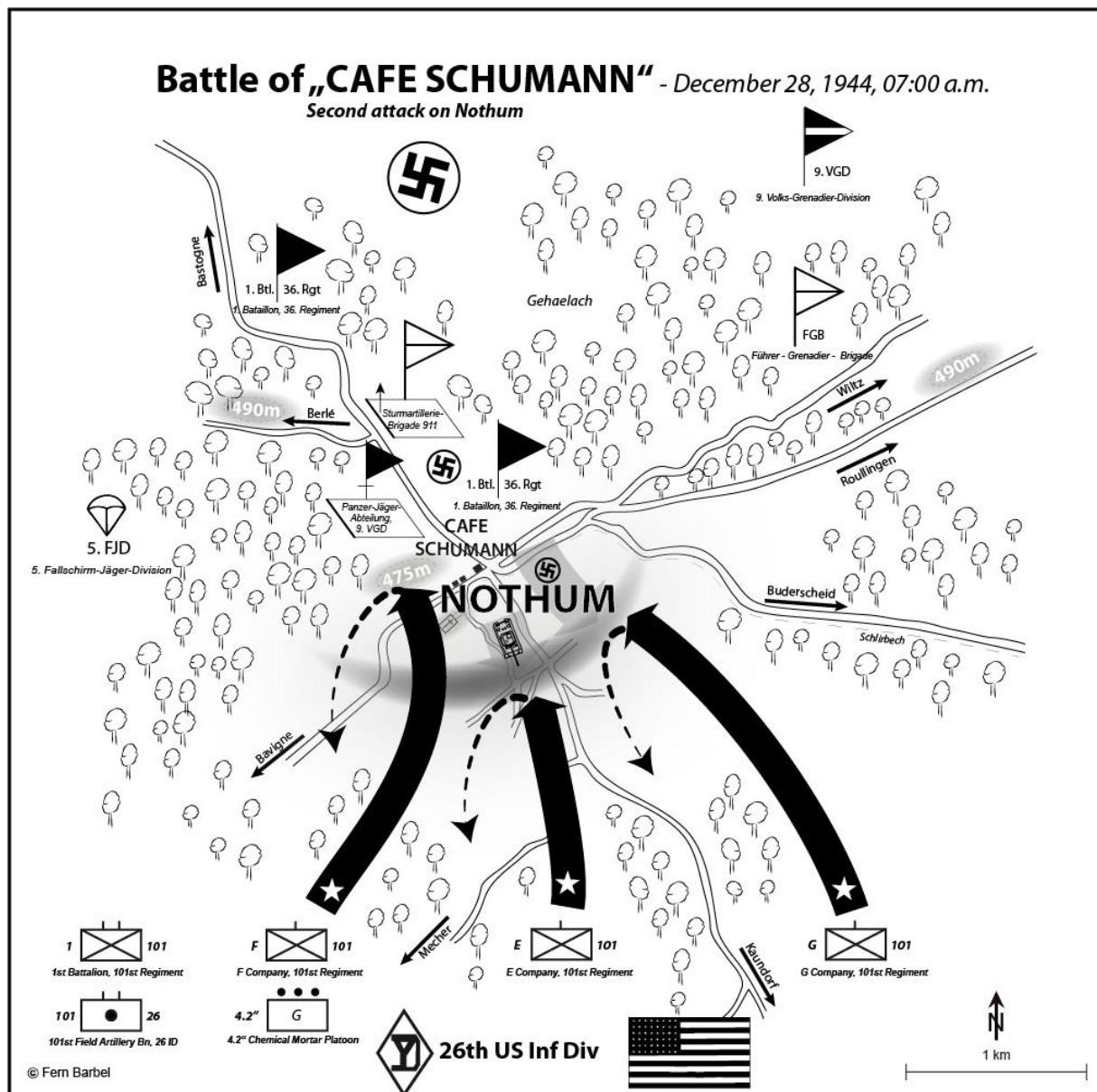






  Through the **24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of December** the progress of the attacking 3<sup>rd</sup> US Army was delayed by the recurrent counter-attacks and the stiff resistance by the enemy. Heavy fighting took place in the sector of the 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division in Arsdorf and especially in Eschdorf. The battle raged for two days and nights, and the latter town was reduced to rubble. These strategic positions enabled the 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division to cross the Sûre River on the following day near Lultzhausen in spite of a strong enemy resistance. - On **Dec 26**, the 4<sup>th</sup> US Armored Div made contact with the defenders of Bastogne. – The battlefield between the 4<sup>th</sup> US Armored Division and the 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division was assigned to the 6<sup>th</sup> US Cavalry Group. On **Dec 27**, the 35<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division attacked through the 6<sup>th</sup> US Cavalry Group and seized Surré, Boulaide and Baschleiden. The 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division consolidated the bridgehead on the other side of the Sûre River, and, after the capture of Liefrange, advanced to the high grounds to conquer Mecher and Kaundorf. The 80<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division still held up by the enemy, was not able to establish contact with the right wing of the 104<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division.



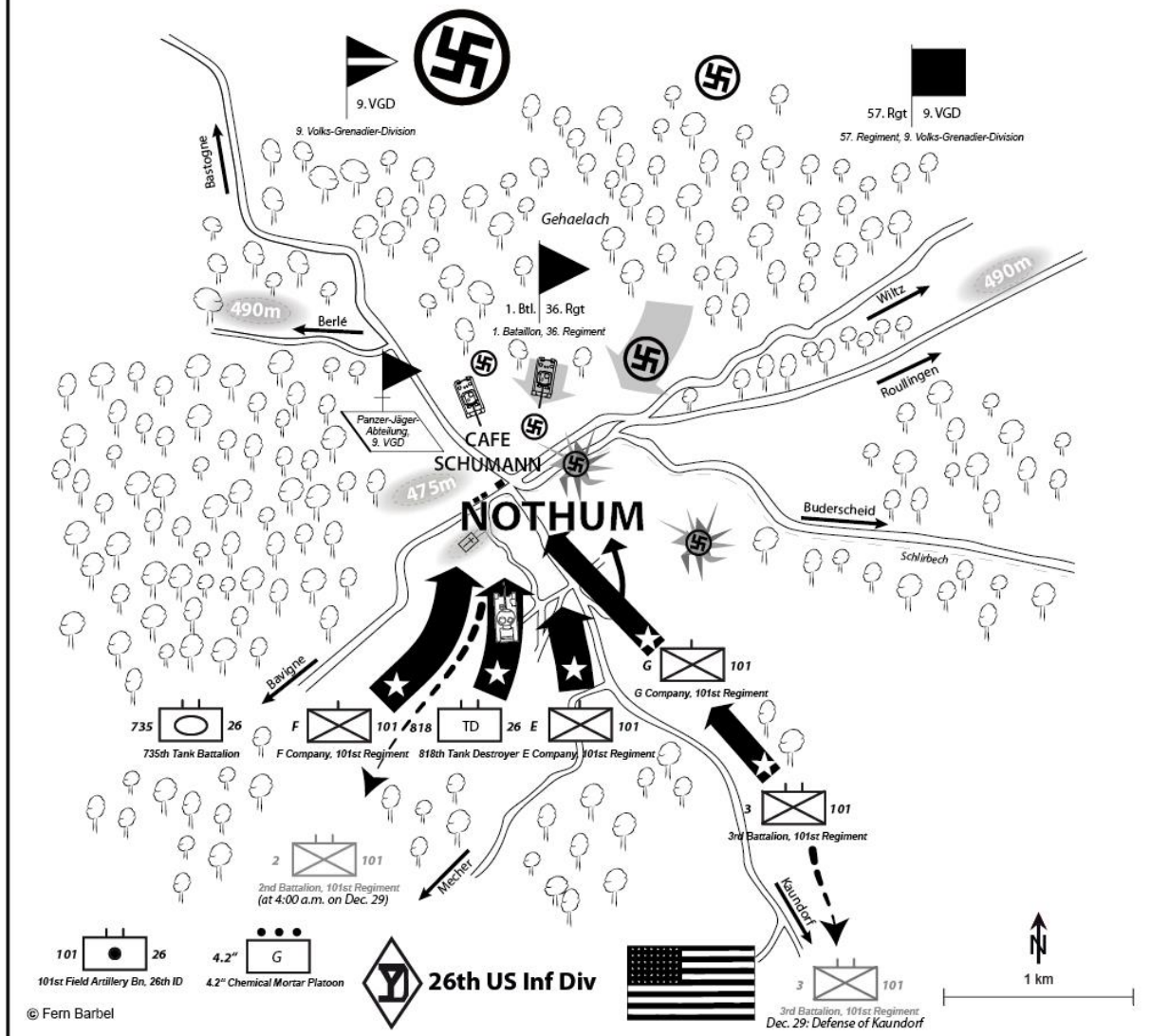
  During the **night of December 27, 1944**, units of the 101<sup>st</sup> Regiment, 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division attacked without any success the village of Nothum. The troops had to retreat to their initial jump-off positions after 11:00 p.m.



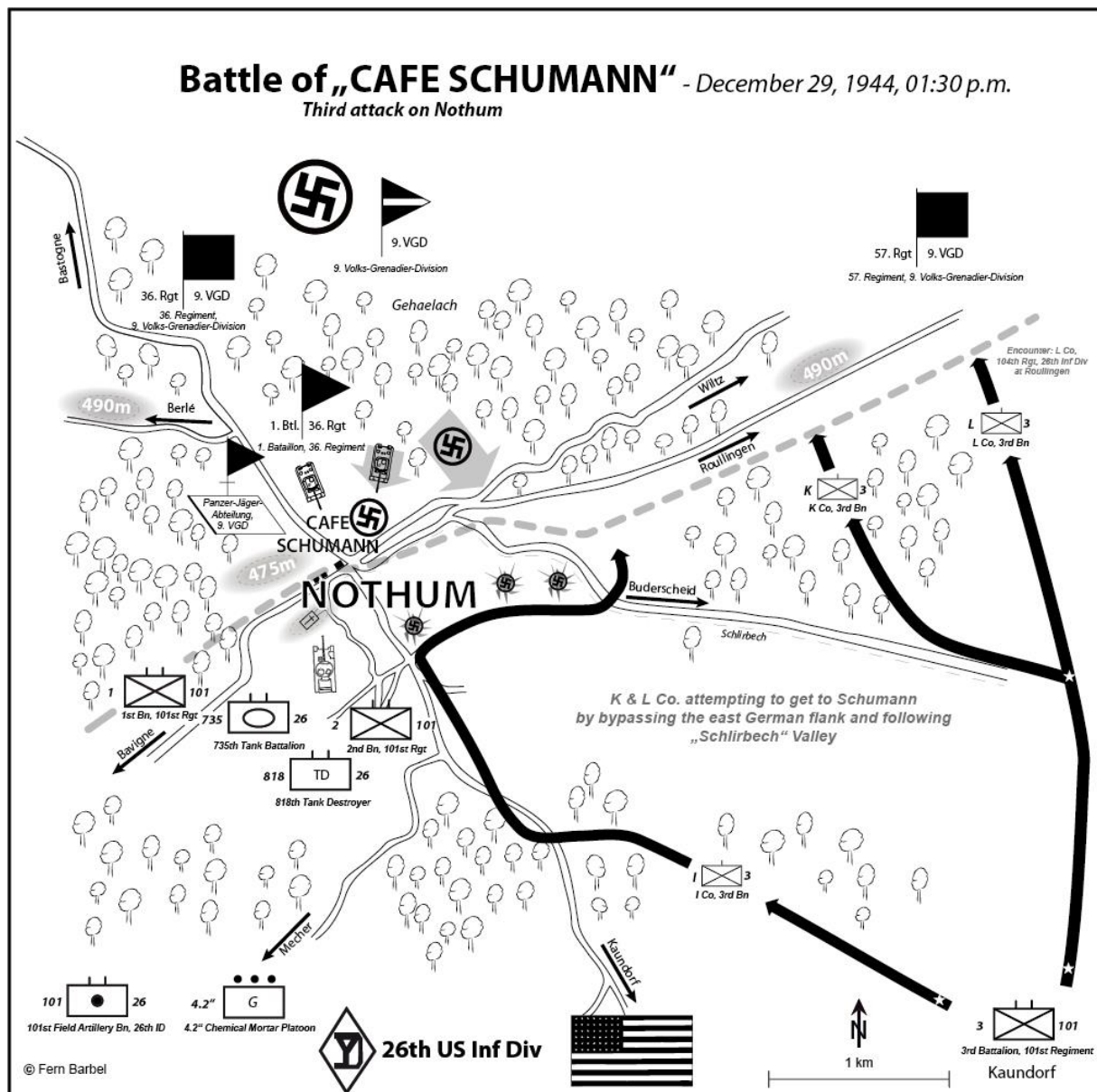


 On **Dec 28, at 7:00 a.m.**, the U.S. attack was resumed under heavy supporting artillery fire. But the German soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the 36<sup>th</sup> Grenadier Regiment of the 9<sup>th</sup> Volks-Grenadier-Division (VGD – Colonel Kolb) with the support of the Panzerjägerabteilung 9 (Tank Destroyer Unit 9) and parts of the Sturmartillerie-Brigade 911 (brigade of assault guns) of the Führer-Grenadier-Brigade (FGB) prevented the American advance. Due to the artificial fog screen laid by the 4.2 Chemical Mortar Platoon, F Company retreated with many casualties. So did E and G Company. The junction with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion operating on the west side of the road to Bavigne had not been successful.





## Battle of „CAFE SCHUMANN“ - December 28, 1944, 04:30 p.m.

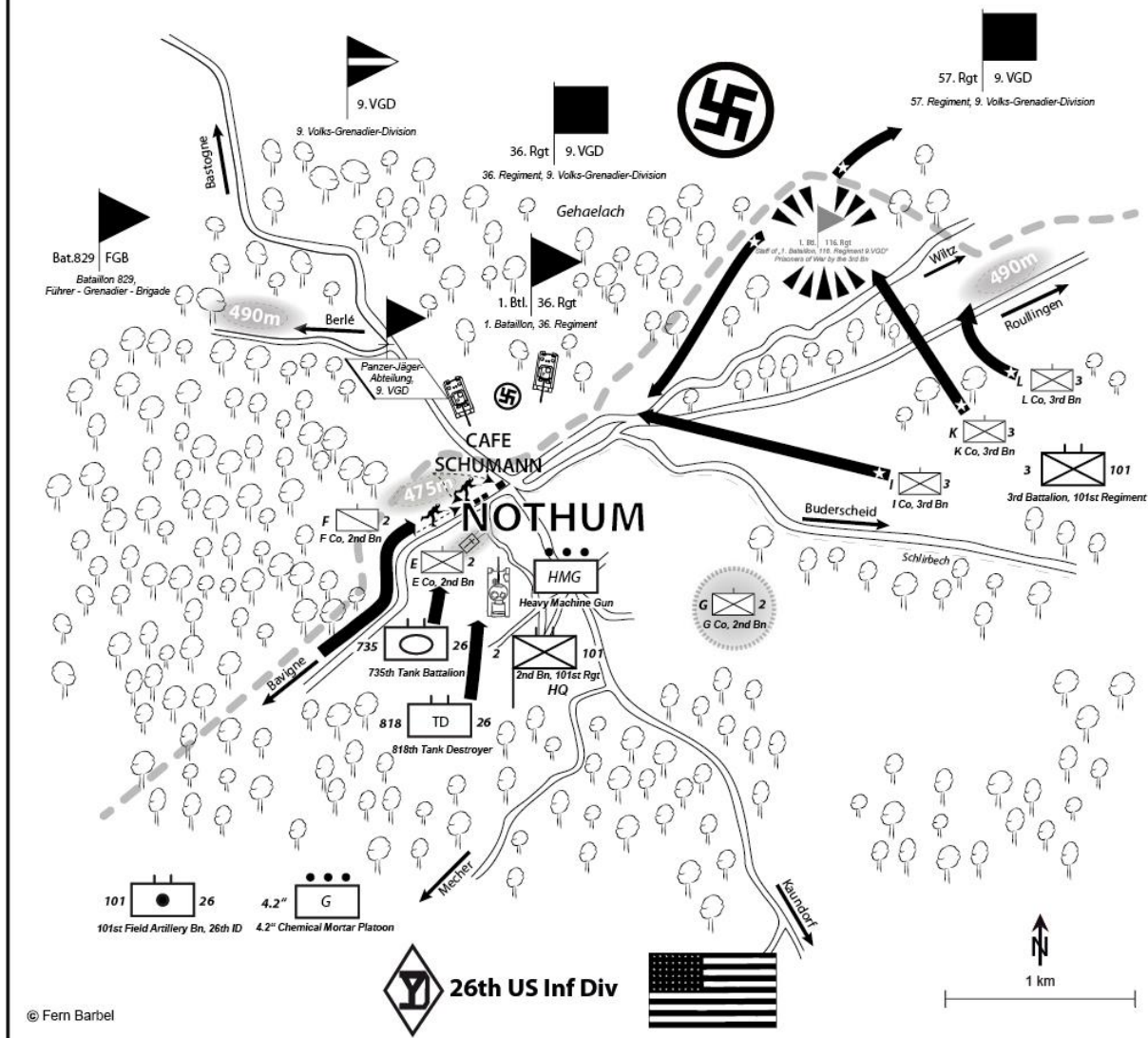




On Dec 28, at 4:30 p.m., after an intense artillery and mortar fire, US tanks and tank destroyers supported the infantry's attack on Nothum. Unfortunately a tank killed seven of its own troops unintentionally. Finally, after heavy fighting, F Company reached the cemetery, E Company the village of Nothum, G Company was stopped by heavy German fire coming from Café Schumann and retreated to Nothum. – 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, delayed by a German counter-attack at Kaundorf, advanced to Nothum and ordered its engineer platoon to demine the road up to Café Schumann. However, strong German fire from Café Schumann stopped this action. – The losses of both sides were considerable. At its first engagement, the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the 36<sup>th</sup> Grenadier Regiment had about 40% of losses. - About midnight a German counter-attack was announced for the next day.



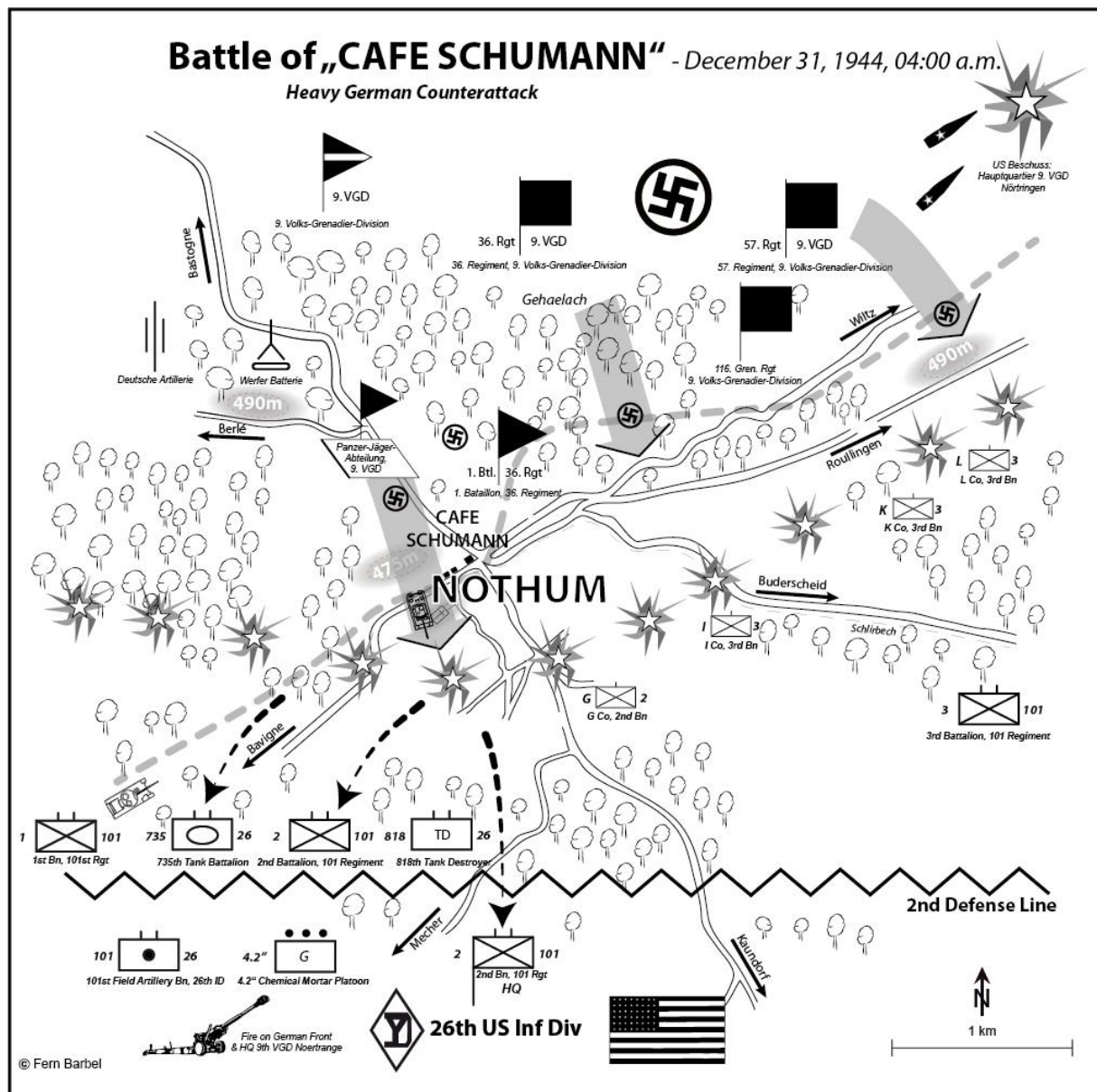
  **December 29:** In order to forestall the German attack, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion retreated from Nothum to its jump-off positions of the previous day at 4:00 a.m. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion was ordered back to the defense of Kaundorf. The 9<sup>th</sup> *Volks-Grenadier-Division* had nearly completely arrived and the worn-out *Führer-Grenadier-Brigade*, except the Grenadier Battalion 829 at Berlé, could be retreated from the front. – However, the announced German attack did not take place. At **1:00 p.m.**, the US troops re-conquered Nothum without any losses. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion advanced again starting from Kaundorf. K and L Companies tried to turn the enemy's flank east of Nothum by following the "Schlirbach" brook valley and were to meet I Company at Café Schumann. I Company fell under enemy fire and swerved east. K Company succeeded in occupying the hill 490 on the way to Roullingen. Company L secured the right flank, advanced in the direction of Roullingen where it established the contact with L Company of the 104<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Regiment, 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division. In spite of being far away from its initial objective, the Schumann crossroads, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion held this important strategic position near Roullingen in the direction of Wiltz.



## Attack / Capture of „CAFE SCHUMANN“ - December 30, 1944, 10:45 a.m.

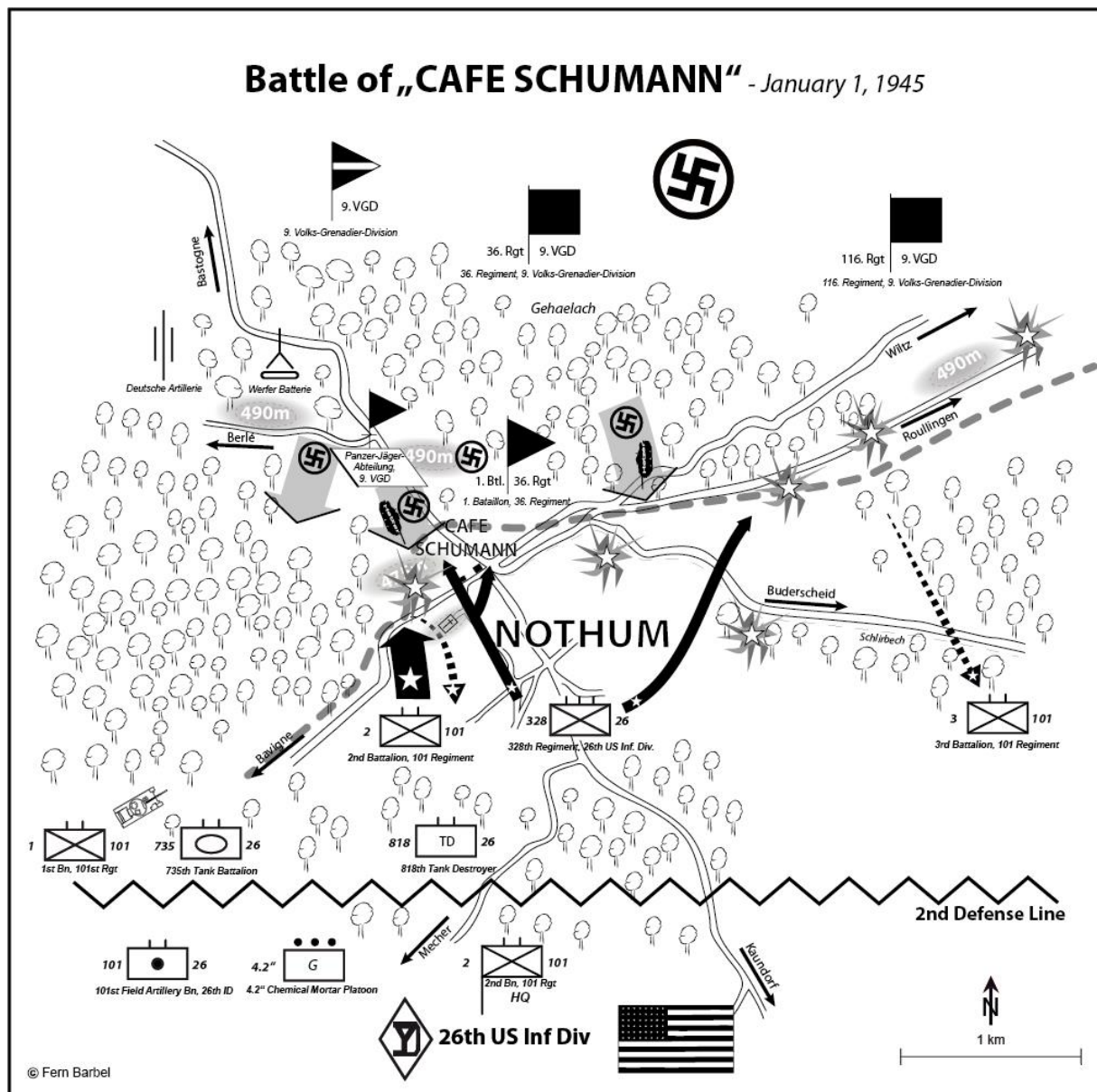


  On **December 30, at 10:45 a.m.**, the 3rd Battalion, close to the bifurcation to Roullingen, advanced into a gap between the *57th Grenadier Regiment* and the *36th Grenadier Regiment* of the *9th Volks-Grenadier-Division*. The road to Wiltz was blocked; the German positions towards the Schumann crossroads and the road towards the village of Roullingen were overrun. The commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, *116th Grenadier Regiment* was taken prisoner with his staff. - At 11.15 a.m., after a violent artillery barrage and with the support of heavy machine gun fire, F Company of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion took the group of houses around Café Schumann in a surprise attack. E Company followed and many German soldiers surrendered. As G Company had missed the objective and had not linked up with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, the two companies could not continue their attack to hill 506 ahead of Berl . They dug their foxholes along the road and covered them with wooden beams they found in the houses. – During the night, many German patrols tried to spy out the American strength.



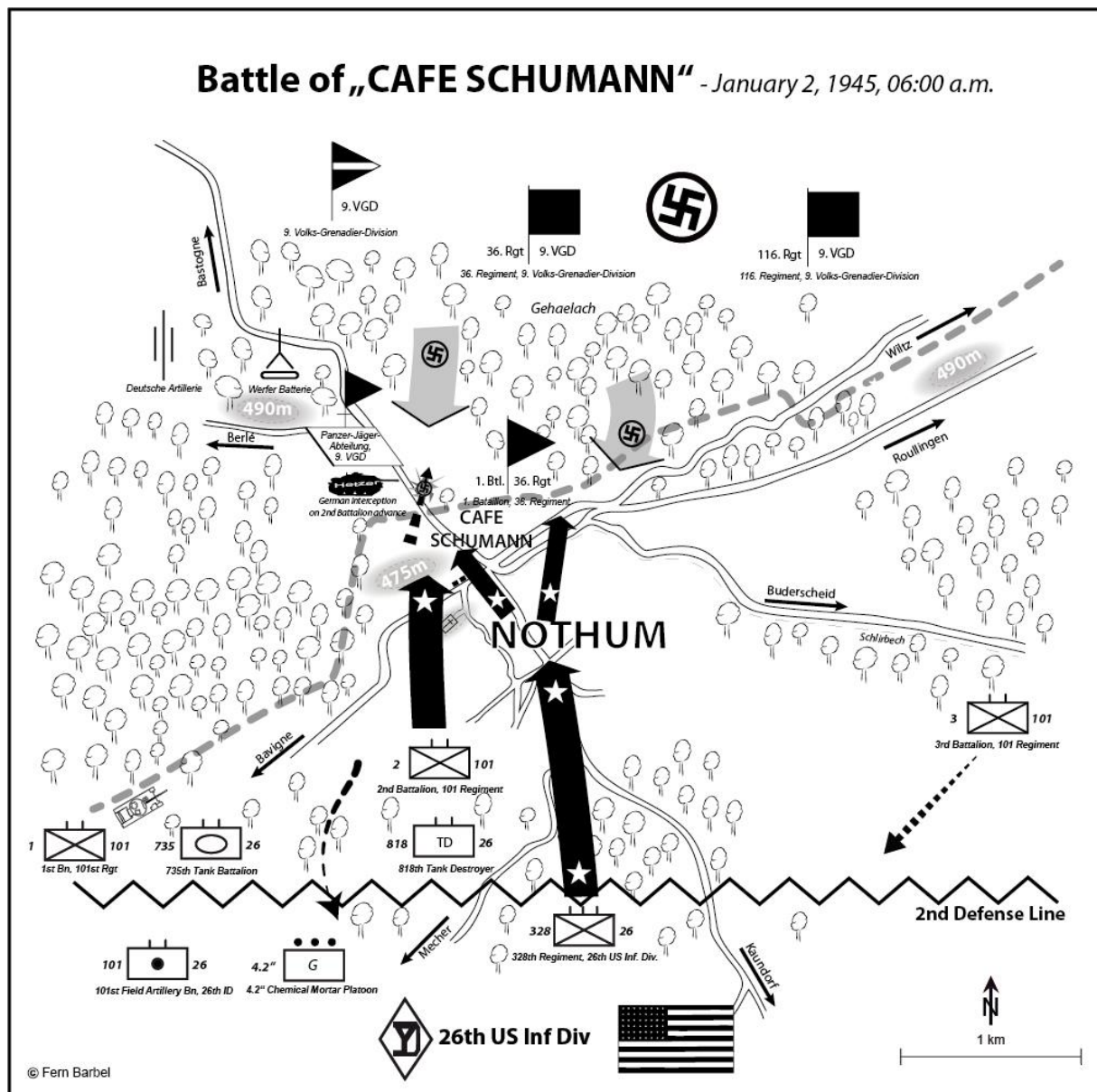




  **On December 31,** the German armed forces high command had not yet abandoned the objective of capturing Bastogne and attached the *1<sup>st</sup> SS-Panzerkorps* (with the *9<sup>th</sup>* and the *12<sup>th</sup> SS-Panzerdivision*) to the *5<sup>th</sup> Panzerarmee*. To prevent that the German troops at Bastogne could be cut off, it was a high strategic necessity that the front around Nothum had to be defended at all costs. - **At 4:00 a.m.,** after heavy artillery and mortar shelling, the Germans attacked and re-conquered the American positions near Roullingen, hill 490. All day long, the American artillery fired over 15.000 shells on the German front as well as on the *9<sup>th</sup> Volks-Grenadier-Division's* headquarters at Noertrange. A second defense line was established north of Mecher. The US mortar- and MG-platoons had many casualties. The Germans attacked three times during the night and broke through the first defense line. Only US artillery fire on the own lines stopped them.

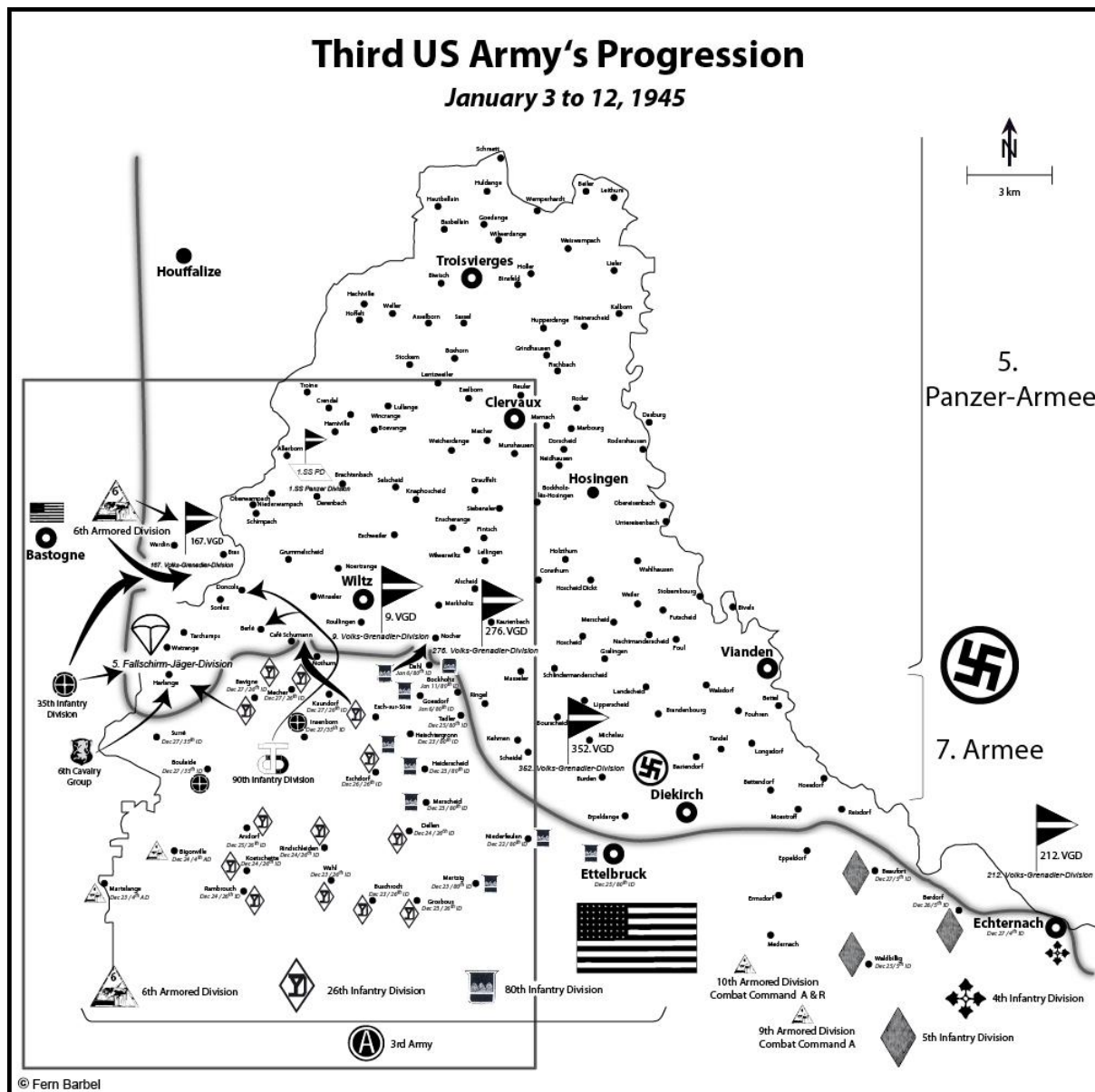




At 02:00 a.m., on **January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1945**, the Americans progressively began replacing the 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment by units of the 328<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. – At 08:56, the Germans again attacked the crossroads with the support of *Hetzer*-tanks of the Tank Destroyer Unit of the 9<sup>th</sup> *Volks-Grenadier-Division*. The attack was however stopped by US artillery fire. After three days of fighting under the most adverse conditions, the units on both sides were worn out. Nevertheless, the American command wasn't discouraged and planned a new attack on hill 490 near Berl  for the next day.





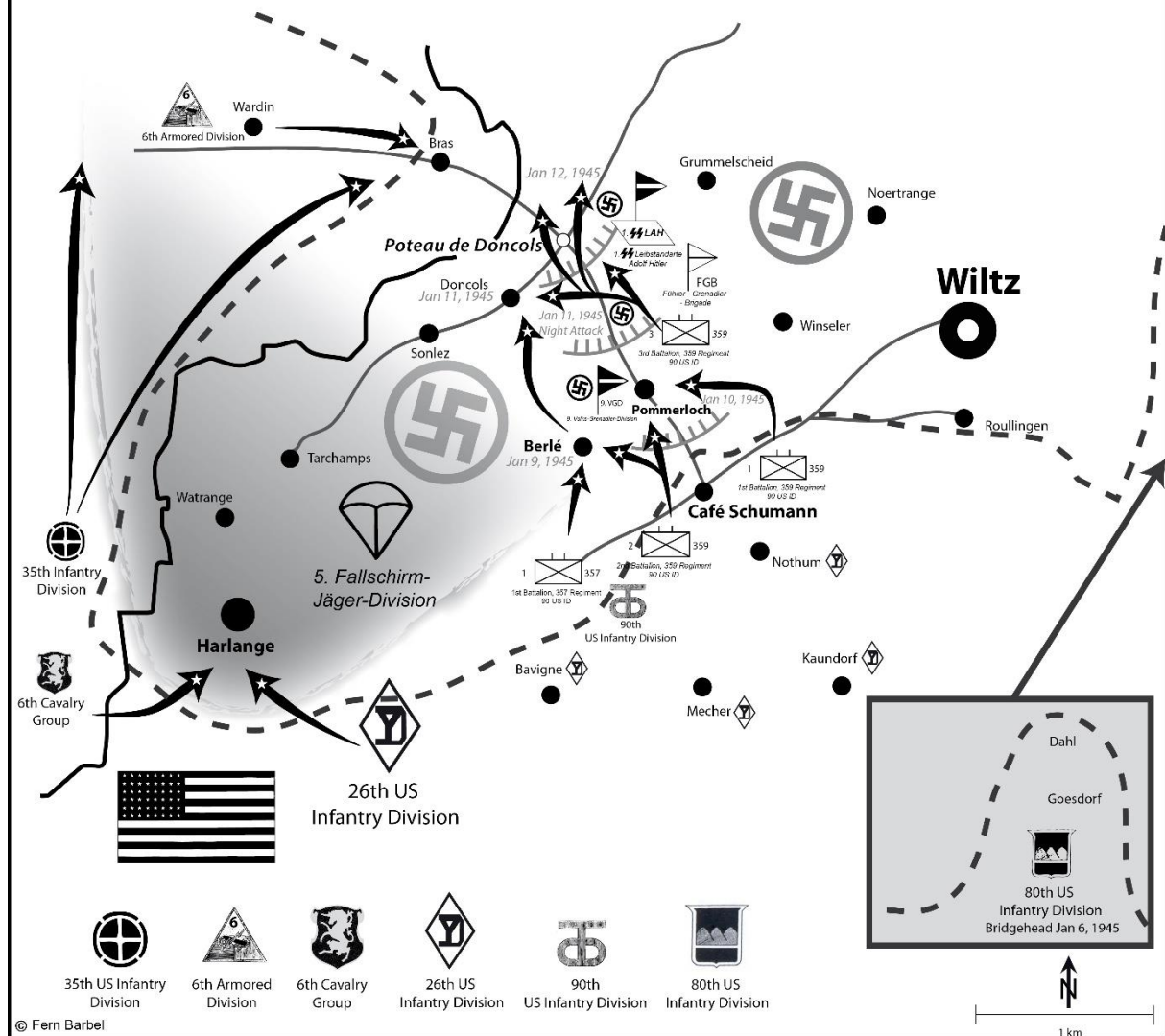
  **On January 2, 1945, at 6:00 a.m.,** the remains of E, F and G Companies should have conquered hill 490 (Berlé). 200 meters from their starting point, heavy German artillery, assault gun and a quadruple 2cm anti-aircraft gun forced the Americans to retreat to their starting point and pinned them down. – The following day, the 65 remaining soldiers of the initial 871 men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 101<sup>st</sup> US Infantry Regiment, were replaced by the 328<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division. – The following days, “Task Force Scott” was formed by the soldiers still fit for combat of the 101<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment who, together with “Task Force Ficket” of the 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Group, should roll up the Pocket of Harlange by the south attacking from the Poteau of Harlange.



  **January 3 to 6, 1945.** The American high command intended to cut off the German elite troops fighting in the “Pocket of Harlange” in attacking simultaneously from the west and the south-east in order to unify the troops at the important crossroad of Doncols. On January 4, the commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 36<sup>th</sup> *Grenadier Regiment*, was taken prisoner with his staff. Up to the 6<sup>th</sup> of January, the 328<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Regiment tried in vain to force the breakthrough to the crossroad via the hill 490 (Berlé). The situation was comparable to a trench-war with terrible losses on both sides. – To weaken the German defense at Nothum, the 80<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division crossed the Sûre River in the east and attacked Goesdorf and Dahl on **January 6**. The capture of Dahl was a new threat in the back of the German troops fighting around Wiltz. In order to clear up the danger at Dahl, Fieldmarshal Model ordered the *Führer-Grenadier-Brigade* from the area of Doncols – Grummelscheid to Nocher.

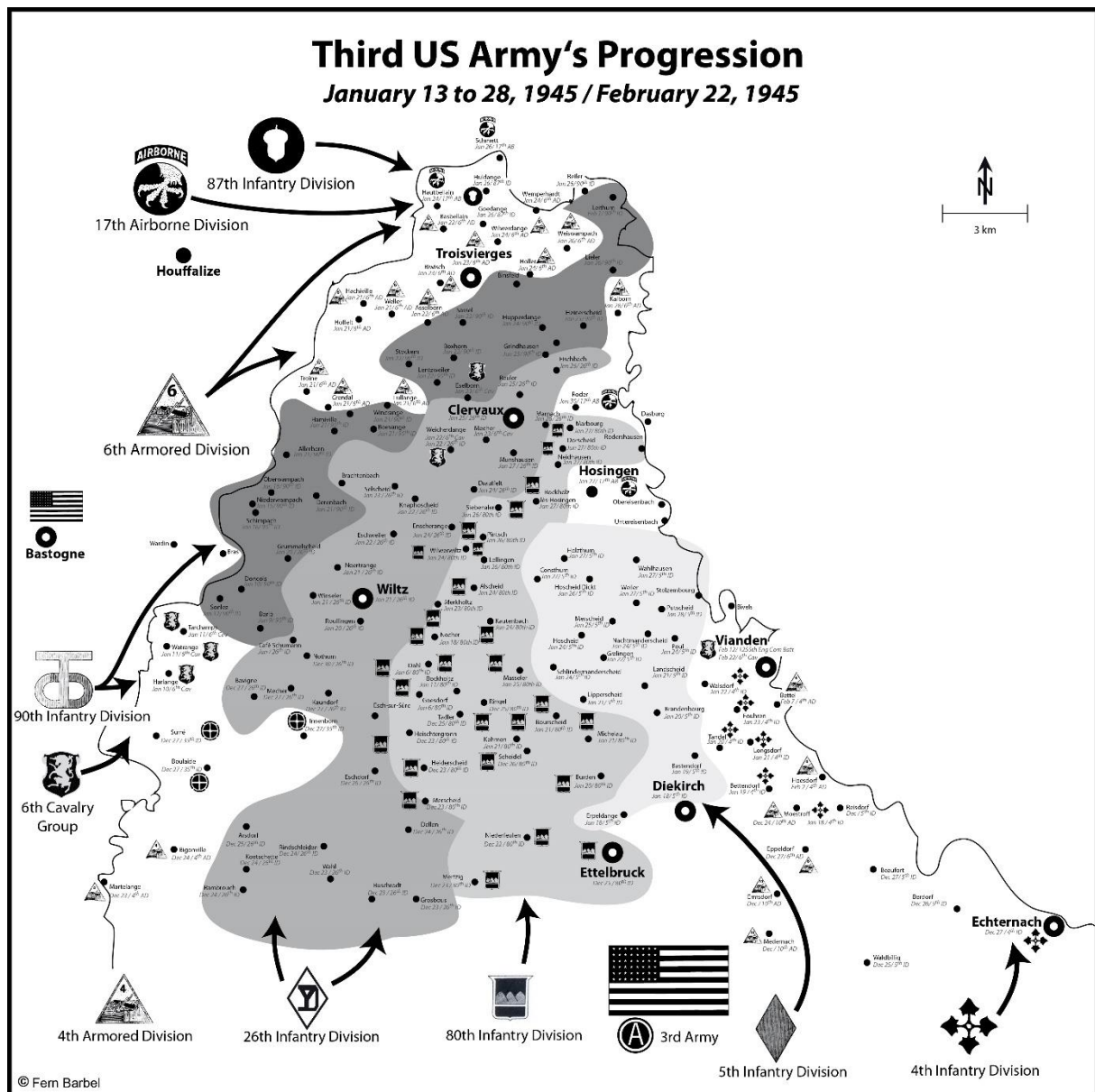
## Winding up of the „Pocket of Harlange“



January 7- 12, 1945



During the period of **January 5 to 9**, 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division maintained defensive positions, while 90<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division prepared to attack through 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division's positions. Despite the German 9<sup>th</sup> Volks-Grenadier-Division's and 5<sup>th</sup> Parachute Division's fierce resistance, the 357<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Regiment of the 90<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division succeeded in capturing Berlé on **January 9** and Sonlez on **January 10**. – The main burden of the attack on Doncols lay in the sector of the 359<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Regiment that, indeed, succeeded in conquering hill 490 on January 9, but any further advance was annihilated by the German defense fire on Pommerloch. It was only after a risky night attack that the German defenses of the Poteau of Doncols could be by-passed and that the crossroad as well as the village of Doncols were conquered on **January 11** by daylight. – The 6<sup>th</sup> US Armored Division occupied Wardin and Bras. Task Force Fickett of the 6<sup>th</sup> US Cavalry Group attacked Harlange, while Task Force Scott of the 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division kicked the enemy out of the region of Harlange. - Even though the Doncols crossroad changed several times the occupiers due to the fierce counter-attacks of the 9<sup>th</sup> Volks-Grenadier-Division and the combat teams of the SS-Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler and the Führer-Grenadier-Brigade, the "Pocket of Harlange" could definitely be eliminated on **January 12** owing to the reunion of the 90<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division with the 6<sup>th</sup> US Armored Division and the 35<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division. A large part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Fallschirmjägerdivision was broken up and many of its soldiers were taken prisoners. In this way the fighting around the heights of Nothum – Doncols came to an end. - Never in History, so many horrors and sufferings had ever taken place in such a short period on the territory of Luxembourg.





  During the week of **January 13 to 20, 1945**, the front in the 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division area remained stable, the 90<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division made small gains, while the enemy, reinforced by the *1<sup>st</sup> SS-Panzerdivision*, resisted vigorously. Meanwhile, by **January 20, 1945**, First Army Troops had pushed down from the north and had linked up with Third Army forces. They squeezed the German advance and drove the enemy back to the East. On **January 21**, two regiments of the 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division crossed the Wiltz River, fought their way to Noertrange, penetrated into Wiltz and continued liberating the villages north of this town. Furthermore, the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Divisions started their attacks north and east of Diekirch on **January 18** and threatened to cut the German supply and retreat routes. – Third Army's Infantry and Armored Divisions succeeded in liberating the north of Luxembourg up to **January 28, 1945**. The upper town of Vianden was liberated by the 1255<sup>th</sup> Engineer Combat Battalion on **February 12** and downtown by elements of the 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Group on **February 22**. The Battle of the Bulge came to an end and the American troops continued their way to the Rhine. **German losses : 26.000 dead soldiers, American losses : 19.000 dead soldiers, British losses: 200 dead soldiers.** (Sources: Charles B. MacDonald)

**Sources :**

**Texts:** Frank ROCKENBROD, President of the “National Liberation Memorial” Association, President of the Musée National d’Histoire Militaire of Diekirch

**Maps:** Fern BARBEL, norTIC, Parc Hosingen